

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

It also devastates the diversity of our culture, at least on the air; I can listen to the same shows in California or New York or Minneapolis or Baton Rouge, and while this may be good once in a while I really miss the diversity that we used to have in radio. And the fewer the stations the fewer the opinions expressed. That can only be bad.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.